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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/927,644	08/13/2001	Noriyuki Matsui	1341.1103	7992

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EXAMINER

HIRL, JOSEPH P

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2121

DATE MAILED: 08/04/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/927,644

Applicant(s)

MATSUI ET AL.

Examiner

Joseph P. Hirl

Art Unit

2121

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILED ACTION**

1. Claims 1-8 are pending in this application.
2. The claims and only the claims form the metes and bounds of the invention. The Examiner has full latitude to interpret each claim in the broadest reasonable sense. Examiner will reference prior art using terminology familiar to one of ordinary skill in the art. Such an approach is broad in concept and can be either explicit or implicit in meaning.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101***

3. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

4. Claim 5-8 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The practical application test requires that a useful, concrete and tangible result be accomplished. Claims 5-8 represent abstract methodology and therefore are intangible. The consequence is non-statutory.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

6. Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Hennessey et al (U. S. Patent 6,483,938, referred to as **Hennessey**).

**Claims 1, 5**

Hennessey anticipates extracting, from a knowledge a database which stores a plurality of causes, a plurality of questions having a cause-and-effect relation with the plurality of causes, and correlation levels showing a degree of correlations between the causes and corresponding questions, certain questions out of the plurality of questions by an algorithm based on the correlation levels (**Hennessey**, col 2, lines 9-24); and extracting causes with high correlation levels out of the plurality of causes based on an answer result of each of the certain questions from a searcher (**Hennessey**, col 2, lines 9-24; Examiner's Note (EN): questions are synonymous with anomalies, degree of correlation is established by maximum similarity, the algorithm is the program).

**Claims 2, 6**

Hennessey anticipates making the computer realize the step of assigning a priority to each of the extracted causes based on the correlation levels (**Hennessey**, col 2, lines 9-24; EN: in order to locate a set of maximum similarity, one of ordinary skill in the art would quantify by some mechanism the similarity or priority).

**Claims 3, 7**

Hennessey anticipates making the computer realize the step of displaying the extracted causes as a search result in colors corresponding to the priorities (**Hennessey**, col 21, Table IV; EN: color is labeled in the table, a computer with monitor

is used as part of the disclosure, monitors typically display in color albeit black and white is part of the color spectrum).

**Claims 4, 8**

Hennessey anticipates a weight is assigned to each of the answer results in the cause extracting step (**Hennessey**, col 28, lines 60-67; col 29, lines 1-5).

**Conclusion**

7. Claims 1-8 are rejected.

***Correspondence Information***

Any inquiry concerning this information or related to the subject disclosure should be directed to the Examiner, Joseph P. Hirl, whose telephone number is (703) 305-1668. The Examiner can be reached on Monday – Thursday from 6:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, Anil Khatri can be reached at (703) 305-0282.

Any response to this office action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks,

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Washington, D. C. 20231;

or faxed to:

(703) 746-7239 (for formal communications intended for entry);

or faxed to:

(703) 746-7290 (for informal or draft communications with notation of  
"Proposed" or "Draft" for the desk of the Examiner).

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to:

Receptionist, Crystal Park II  
2121 Crystal Drive,  
Arlington, Virginia.

Joseph P. Hirl



July 28, 2003

Wilbert L. Starks, Jr.  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit - 2121

